

IN THE CLAIMS

The status of each claim is listed below.

Claims 1-22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (New): An antibody
which has a positive reactivity against cell lines U937 and K562 and
which recognizes a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ
ID NO: 1 said polypeptide having pre-B cell growth-supporting ability.

Claim 24 (New): The antibody of Claim 23 which is a monoclonal antibody.

Claim 25 (New): The monoclonal antibody of Claim 24 which is IgM.

Claim 26 (New): The antibody of Claim 24 which is produced by the hybridoma
deposited under the accession number FERM BP-4433.

Claim 27 (New): A hybridoma which produces a monoclonal antibody
which has a positive reactivity against cell lines U937 and K562 and
which recognizes a polypeptide consisting of the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ
ID NO: 1 said polypeptide having pre-B cell growth-supporting ability.

Claim 28 (New): The hybridoma of claim 27, which produces an IgM monoclonal
antibody.

Claim 29 (New): The hybridoma of claim 27, deposited under accession number FERM BP-4433 (RS38).

Claim 30 (New): A method for identifying a synovial cell comprising:
contacting a synovial cell with the antibody of claim 23 for a time and under conditions suitable for binding of the antibody to the synovial cell,
and measuring binding.

Claim 31 (New): The method of claim 30, wherein said synovial cell is from a subject having rheumatoid arthritis.

Claim 32 (New): A method for identifying a subject having rheumatoid arthritis comprising:
contacting a synovial cell from a subject suspected of having rheumatoid arthritis with the antibody of claim 23 for a time and under conditions suitable for binding, and
determining binding of said antibody to said synovial cell, wherein the occurrence of, or the amount of, binding identifies rheumatoid arthritis in said subject.